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THE RESULT

OF OUR

MEXICAN POLICY



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THE RESULT OF OUR MEXICAN POLICY

The ruthless disregard of our rights as a neutral nation and the utter contempt shown for our diplomacy by the belligerents of Europe is but the inevitable and logical result of our Mexican policy.

President Wilson's whole Mexican policy started from and has hinged upon his assertion that Huerta murdered Madero. Was it true? Wilson says he did. Those in a position to know say he did not. If he did *not*, then Wilson was wrong and Huerta should have been recognized as the de facto President, for the refusal to recognize him has been the cause of all our troubles.

The crux of the whole Mexican problem, therefore, is, Did Huerta cause the death of Madero? What are the facts?

First. Two weeks before Wilson's inauguration, Huerta, under Mexican law, became automatically the Provisional President, and was so recognized by the Mexican Congress, the body duly authorized to decide that question. Moreover, it was a Congress elected at the same time as Madero, and was, presumably, a Madero Congress.

Second. The foreign ambassadors, including Henry Lane Wilson, our American ambassador, were competent and impartial witnesses, stationed there for the express purpose of watching events. They held a joint meeting and unanimously decided that Huerta was the de facto President and recommended his recognition as such. The other nations followed the advice of their ambassador. America repudiated hers.

Third. No American living in Mexico City has accused Huerta of this deed.

Fourth. Some time ago Mr. De la Barra, one of the most respected citizens of Mexico and a personal friend of Madero, who fled from Mexico after the assassination and who is still an exile, made a statement that Huerta had nothing to do with the murder. Here is a unique witness, whose testimony can not be impeached even by Wilson's partisans.

Fifth. Prominent American citizens, including members of Congress, most of them democrats, who have lived on the Mexican bor-

der all their lives and personally know all the facts and personages involved, have told me that De la Barra's statement is correct and that Huerta was not responsible for Madero's death. This is their history of events.

When Porfirio Díaz was forced out of the Presidency, De la Barra, because he was not identified with either faction, was chosen Provisional President, and was so recognized by the United States. An election was held, and it was under the presidency of De la Barra that Madero was made Permanent President. As De la Barra was afterward in Madero's cabinet and was his personal friend, it would seem to the sincere searcher after truth that his testimony *must* be more reliable than the impulsive guesswork of Wilson, who sought no advice from others, *ignored voluntary information proffered by those who did know*, decided by himself what he would do, and then issued his ipse dixit founded on ignorance. Such was the origin of Wilson's Mexican Policy.

He had no personal knowledge of Mexico, or of its politics or of the killing of Madero, was 3500 miles away, was busy moving from Princeton to Washington, preparing for his inauguration, selecting his cabinet and struggling with a horde of eager office seekers.

Who was likely to know best, whether Huerta murdered Madero? Was it all these disinterested Ambassadors, who were in a position to know, or was it Wilson, who could not possibly know? Was it De la Barra, Madero's friend and cabinet minister, or was it Wilson?

Apparently Wilson stands alone without any support. He is contradicted by the testimony of Mexicans, Americans in Mexico, Americans in Texas, ambassadors and foreigners in civil and official life.

As Wilson's whole policy from his inauguration to the present day has been founded upon his discredited assertion that Huerta murdered Madero, it follows he made a costly blunder when, instead of recognizing Huerta, he told him to "get out"; then allied himself with the known bandit Villa, sending to him his personal agent as adviser, and allowing him to import arms; and finally and unjustly made war upon the sovereignty of Mexico by seizing Vera Cruz.

The power to make war is vested by the Constitution in Congress alone.

Although it was none of our business whom the people of Mexico selected as their President, we nevertheless made war upon them for the express purpose of forcing them to accede to our illegal demands

in that respect. The partisans of our President contend that his act in then sending our Army and Navy to Vera Cruz was not war. If it was not war, why did he, after committing the act, ask Congress to legalize it?

Suppose, for instance, we had notified England she could not have George the Fifth for her King, and, in support of that declaration, had sent our fleet up the Thames to London and had then forcibly collected the customs dues of England and brought the money thus collected to New York. Would England call it war?

Or suppose we had similarly sent our fleet to Hamburg. Would Germany call it war? To ask the question is to answer it. That is exactly what we did to Mexico.

However classical the note might be asserting it was not war, but that it was a lofty and ideal aspiration in the interest of Humanity, the reply of any first-class power would be, not a note, but a cannon ball.

Instead of sending our fleet to Tampico, where the flag had been insulted, we sent it to Vera Cruz, which, like New York in America, is where most of the customs dues of Mexico are collected.

We forcibly collected those dues, put the money in our pocket, brought it to New York, and that same Mexican money *is still in our pocket*.

We had no moral or legal right to it. It was taken at the cannon's mouth. Similar action by an individual would be characterized as highway robbery.

The evacuation of Vera Cruz was as ignominious as its occupation was iniquitous. We ostentatiously brought away our dead sailors, but we left behind our murdered citizens to rot on the ground, unburied and unsung; the only thing we buried there was our honor.

Having notified the warring chieftains that they must get together and select a President, they all complied except Carranza. Then the President, with his usual inconsistency, immediately recognized Carranza.

The flag is still unsaluted. But mark the sequel. Some months later, a Mexican Ambassador is sent by Carranza to Washington. This diplomatic triumph is duly celebrated by our saluting the flag of Mexico.

The President's demand upon Mexico was that *she* must salute *our* flag. The result is *we* salute *her* flag. Thus our dead are avenged and our honor vindicated.

The nations of Europe were not as oblivious to these epoch making events as ourselves. The lesson sank deep into their hearts, their minds and their memories.

Our Government, having done the things it should not have done, promptly proceeded to leave undone the things it should have done.

The first duty of a government is to protect its citizens. That is what government is for.

When the Government sent urgent orders to its consuls to seek out every American and notify him *at once* to leave Mexico, because it no longer intended to protect him, it then and there laid the foundation for all the diplomatic troubles and contempt which have since been heaped upon us. It was the first time in history that any government, however weak, had officially and voluntarily repudiated its sacred obligations to protect its citizens, and had publicly proclaimed its dishonor to an astonished world.

There were three distinct groups of people in Mexico: 1st, the Americans; 2d, the Mexicans; 3d, the Europeans.

What was the effect of this unprecedented notice upon these different groups? There were forty thousand Americans in Mexico, engaged in legitimate business, who had been encouraged to go there during the friendly rule of Diaz. (Just as Sec. McAdoo is now encouraging Americans to invest money in South America.) They stood aghast when notified by their own Government that it would no longer protect them, and they fled in terror.

What was the effect upon the second group, the Mexicans? They were all united in one thing, a common hatred of us because of our previous unjustified interference with their domestic affairs. When they fully comprehended that the American Government would no longer protect its citizens, and saw those citizens abandon all their property in hasty flight, they knew their hour for vengeance had come and hastened to improve it by murdering the men and raping the women. Each unavenged murder was an invitation and an incentive to further slaughter, which went on in accelerated progression.

What was the effect upon the third group, the Europeans? There were several thousand of these, also engaged in business. Under the

Monroe Doctrine the real and final protection of these European nationals devolved upon the United States. America had withdrawn its Ambassador. The other nations had recognized the Huerta Government as the de facto government, and had their regular legations on duty in Mexico City, where they kept vigilant watch over their nationals and had full knowledge of all the outrages perpetrated.

When the United States officially notified the world that it would no longer protect American citizens, these ambassadors were at first incredulous, but when the murderous events proved it to be true they were filled with fear for their own nationals and with contempt for us. Their logical conclusion was that if the United States would not protect its own citizens it surely would not protect Europeans; and, if not, then the Monroe Doctrine was worthless, and they must themselves do their own protecting. Then it was that we fell from our high estate and became the object of their supreme contempt.

These Ambassadors sat in their offices day after day watching events and keeping a record of all the outrages which were well known to them. One day it would be murder of Americans in Sonora, of which no notice was taken. The next day it would be the killing of Americans in Monterey, of which no notice was taken. Another day outrages in Coahuilla and another day rapes in Chihuahua, of which no notice was taken. Day after day the sorry work went on, unnoticed by America but known to and reported upon in all the other capitals of the world except Washington, where the knowledge was rigorously suppressed, until, at last, American diplomacy became a bye word; American honor a subject of derision; American bravery an object of contempt.

Such was our standing when the European war commenced.

Germany, realizing her navy was no match for that of England, withdrew her fleet and interned her merchant marine as rapidly as possible. Events followed rapidly. England made many unwarranted seizures and declared a paper blockade of the North Sea. Germany drew a war zone around the English Islands. England issued her Orders in Council, and declared her purpose to starve Germany.

We can well imagine a meeting of the German Cabinet to consider the situation and determine upon the course of retaliation. The Admiral would say, "Our fleet is only half the size of the English; to

send it into battle would be to invite its total destruction. If we keep it intact, some situation may develop in which we can use it to great advantage. Let us retaliate with our submarines, which are superior to the English, and destroy their ships, war and merchant, one by one, and thus reduce their superiority by attrition."

We can imagine another Member saying: "To do that will embroil us with the neutral nations and bring down upon us their hatred and ill will. There are now no passenger ships left on the ocean except those of England. The Americans are great travelers, and they are now obliged to travel on English ships. We want the good will of America. If we torpedo an English ship, we will surely kill Americans."

"Oh," replies another, "it will make no difference if we do kill a few Americans. The United States has officially ceased to protect its citizens. Look at Mexico, where hundreds have been killed and no notice has been taken of it. Mexico is weak; Germany is powerful. America will take no action. Blow them up."

The Lusitania followed. The seeds thus sown soon ripened, and we have ever since been gathering in the harvest of our folly.

Germany has not disavowed the Lusitania.

Mexico has not saluted the flag.

Japan has not refrained from violating the "open-door" treaty and the sovereignty of China.

"None so poor to do us reverence."

W. H. H. STOWELL.

Amherst, Mass.,

March 8, 1916.

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